



Ottery St Mary Town Council

Minutes of the ORDINARY MEETING OF Planning meeting held on **Tuesday 24 February 2026** at **18:30**. The meeting was held in the **Institute, Yonder Street, Ottery St Mary EX11 1HH**

Present: Cllrs Richard Grainger, Richard Copus, Vicky Johns, Peter Faithfull, Janice Aherne, Sarah Martin and Emily Peka

In Attendance: Kerry Kennell (Town Clerk) and 33 members of the public

Minute Taker: Kerry Kennell, Town Clerk

P/26/02/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were noted from Jane Bushby, Administrator.

P/26/02/11 DECLARATIONS AND DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive Declarations of interest for items on the Agenda and receipt of requests for new Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) dispensations for items on the Agenda

Cllr Grainger	No interests were declared.
Cllr Copus	No interests were declared.
Cllr Aherne	No interests were declared.
Cllr Johns	No interests were declared.
Cllr Martin	No interests were declared.
Cllr Faithfull	No interests were declared.
Cllr Peka	No interests were declared.

P/26/02/11 ADMISSION TO MEETINGS

In consideration of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted): to agree any items to be dealt with after the public and press have been excluded

There were none.

P/26/02/11 REPORTS, CORRESPONDENCE AND ITEMS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE

1) Correspondence between the Town Council and EDDC Planning relating to Planning 26/0094/MOUT Land East of Sidmouth Road

Chair's initials _____

Correspondence from the Senior Planning Officer was noted in relation to application 26/0094/MOUT. EDDC Cllr Johns has written to EDDC in her district councillor capacity. The Council has also written to EDDC.

A member of the public was astonished that the housing numbers count as a material change.

P/26/02/11 MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council of 10th February 2026 and to approve the signing of the Minutes by the Chair as a correct record

The minutes of 10th February 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

P/26/02/11 PLANNING DECISIONS RECEIVED

25/2575/FUL	Haven Yonder, Close Ottery St Mary EX11 1HE	Approved with conditions
26/0045/NMA	Little Gosford Farm, Gosford Lane, Taleford, Devon EX11 1NA	Closed - Approved
26/0050/HRN	Land To The North Of Iron Gate Lodge, Escot Estate , OSM, EX11 1LU	Refused
26/0051/TCA	Sainsburys Supermarkets Ltd Hind Street, OSM, EX11 1BW	TPO not required
25/2617/FUL	7 Taleford Villas, Taleford Devon EX11 1NB	Approved

The above planning decisions were noted.

P/26/02/11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To assist with the smooth running of the meeting, the Chair will allow members of the public present to submit questions/comments relating to items on the agenda for consideration prior to the application being heard. Individual contributions will be limited to 3 minutes. Where there is a group of objectors or supporters for an application, a spokesperson should be appointed to speak on behalf of the group. The Chair will invite the member of public to speak, after the application has been introduced.

It was agreed that the hedge removal at Gerway will be reported to the Police by the Clerk.

P/26/02/11 TO CONSIDER AND DETERMINE OBSERVATIONS ON THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

Reference	Applicant	Details
1) 26/0094/MOUT	Mr Davis C/O Planning Ltd	Outline application for residential development for up to 63 dwellings and associated infrastructure (all matters reserved except for access) Land East of Sidmouth Road, OSM
There was a very lengthy discussion regarding this application.		

Chair's initials _____

The Council strongly objects to this application on multiple grounds, many of which were central to the previous Planning Inspector's dismissal and remain wholly unresolved. Despite the passage of time and changes in district-wide housing need, the core harms identified by the Inspector continue to apply, and nothing material has changed on site to overcome those concerns.

The Planning Inspector's Previous Findings Remain Decisive

At the last appeal, the Inspector explicitly recognised that:

East Devon District Council could not demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply at that time; Even so, the harms significantly outweighed the benefits, including impacts on the landscape, loss of Grade 2 agricultural land, and the unsuitability of the site's access arrangements.

Since that decision, district-wide housing pressures may have increased, but the legal test under national policy remains the same: unless site-specific harms have been overcome, the conclusion cannot be different.

There is no evidence that anything material has changed on this site to address the Inspector's findings. Rolling farmland continues to form a positive, open approach to the town. The proposed scheme remains incongruous and would fundamentally alter the existing rural character. Landscaping cannot adequately mitigate the degree of visual change.

Loss of Grade 2 Agricultural Land

The development results in the permanent loss of productive Grade 2 farmland. The Inspector previously considered this loss significant, and the current proposal offers no justification to reach a different conclusion. This is a valuable resource that should only be developed where benefits demonstrably outweigh harm—that test is not met.

Highways and Access – Severe and Unresolved Safety Issues

Highways concerns remain one of the most significant objections.

Impact on Existing Residents (Policy TC7)

Independent professional analysis—commissioned by residents—confirms that: Properties at Field Fair, Sunnylands and Sunnylands Cottage would not be able to safely turn right into or out of their homes due to the proposed access arrangements.

This fails to protect access to existing properties, thereby contravening Policy TC7.

The Council request swept path analysis from the applicant to rebut this evidence.

Absence of Proper Highways Evidence

Despite relying on external professionals elsewhere, the applicant provides:

No independent swept path analysis; Documents dated as far back as 2015;

Contradictory or outdated information (including a 2021 tree inventory vs. a 2025 document claiming no trees exist). The Council do not feel it is reasonable for an applicant to present incomplete evidence while expecting the Highways Authority to accept their position without scrutiny.

Pavement Width and Pedestrian Safety

The application proposes pavement widths as narrow as 1.42m in places—below the 2m standard and even falling below the minimum of 1.5m—and on a busy vehicular route.

This is unacceptable in an area where: Children walk to and from the primary school,

Tip Hill pavements already narrow to less than 1m in sections, there is no continuous pavement on the key route to school.

The Highways Authority must be reminded that existing deficiencies cannot justify approving new substandard arrangements.

Strategic Highway Context

Residents report heavy vehicles already struggling along the route and raise valid concerns about increased traffic through the town due to the site being located on the wrong side of Ottery. It was noted that traffic counters were in situ during a period when the town centre was affected by roadworks which undermines their reliability.

The Council feel strongly that DCC Highways should be formally challenged and asked to reconsider the evidence before issuing any recommendation.

Environmental and Biodiversity Concerns

Contradictions in the tree and hedgerow documentation are significant:

A 2021 document recorded multiple trees along H2.

A 2025 submission claims no trees are present, which is factually incorrect as temporary TPO's are in place.

Furthermore, the application states that no protected species are present, directly contradicting its own ecology surveys. The removal and thinning of a 30ft hedge—a prominent historic boundary—constitutes further harm.

Application Documentation Contains Inconsistencies

Concerns include use of outdated technical documents (some dated 2015);

Statements that are factually incorrect; Missing analysis that should be standard for an application of this scale. These issues further undermine confidence in the robustness of the submission.

The Site Remains the Wrong Location for New Development

For all the reasons above—highways, landscape impact, agricultural land loss, pedestrian safety, and ecological concerns—the site remains unsuitable for development. The proposal is effectively identical to the previously dismissed scheme, submitted again solely due to changes in the five-year land supply position. However, the Inspector's core harms still stand, and this Council sees no material change that would justify granting permission now.

Ottery St Mary Town Council strongly objects to this application.

- The site is not sustainable.
- The highways risks are serious and unresolved.
- The landscape harm remains significant.
- The loss of Grade 2 farmland is unjustified.
- The application contains material inaccuracies and omissions.
- None of the Inspector's previous concerns have been meaningfully addressed.

We therefore urge East Devon District Council's Planning Committee to refuse this application in full, and we request that DCC Highways be formally asked to re-examine the independent evidence before any recommendation is issued.			
2)	26/0185/FUL	Mr Maurice Wills	Demolition of conservatory to the south elevation replaced with raised rear decking, proposed 2 storey extension to the west elevation and replacement porch to the north elevation 18 Ridgeway Gardens, OSM, EX11 1DU
The Council support the application but reiterate that the work proposed by South West Water should be completed by the applicant.			
3)	26/0196/FUL	Mr & Mrs Williamson	Removal of chimney stack, addition of roof window, raising roof <100mm to allow addition of insulation, remodelling 2no. windows with addition of 'Juliet' balcony St Marys, Hayne Close, Tipton st John, EX10 0BA
The Council support the application but request the installation of a bat box.			
4)	25/2638/FUL	Mr Lewis Strawbridge	Provision of a temporary agricultural workers dwelling Land South of Oak Lodge, Chineway Road, OSM
There was a lengthy discussion regarding this application. The Town Council supports the application in principle, subject to the accommodation being temporary, but advocates this is a tied accommodation which restricts whoever works there living on the land, with adequate drainage measures in place to protect the surrounding environment, including the adjacent pond. <i>Cllr Faithfull objected.</i>			
5)	26/0182/FUL	Mr & Mrs Smith	Demolition of existing two storey dwelling and workshop outbuilding, and erection of replacement two storey dwelling and garage outbuilding. To include associated landscaping works, and widening of existing site access Rose Cottage, East Hill, Sidmouth, EX10 0LR
There was a lengthy discussion regarding this application. <i>Cllr Grainger left the meeting.</i> The Town Council is neutral on this application. While supportive of the proposed upgrades to the dwelling, councillors have concerns regarding the materials specified. Additionally, insufficient information has been provided about the foul drainage arrangements, and the Council's principal concern relates to the potential future use of the garage as a separate residential unit.			
6)	25/2643/FUL	Mr Trevor Lambert-Gorwyn	Installation of cladding on the east and west elevations of an existing lean-to car port (retrospective) 6 Coombe Vale, Tipton St John, EX10 0AU
The Council support the application.			
7)	26/0255/FUL	Claire Wilcox	Proposed porch to the east elevation and single storey extension to the west elevation 1 Meadow Close, OSM, EX11 1EW

Chair's initials _____

The Council support the application.

P/26/02/11 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS RELATING TO PLANNING MATTERS

It was noted there is no update from the Enforcement Officer regarding an issue that has been raised with them.

P/26/02/11 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING: TBC

Meeting concluded at 20:07.

Signed Chair:	
Date:	

Chair's initials _____

Chair's initials _____